

## Join the Volunteers!

Our volunteers regularly maintain and enhance the Nature Reserve. We meet at the Orchard Stump Circle on Wednesdays from 9.30am and the second Saturday of each month from 10.00am. If you would like to join us, contact Rebekah Mulligan on [beckskey1@gmail.com](mailto:beckskey1@gmail.com). No previous experience is necessary, and we are proud of our record of developing our volunteers' skills, including hedge laying, scything, wildlife surveying, fruit tree management and fencing.



## Would you like to help support the Fairfield Association?

**Community Membership** is free: join up if you want to get involved and hear from us regularly about news and events. Visit <https://fairfieldassociation.org/get-involved/community-membership>

**Fairfield Friends** are members who make regular donations that provide our charity with a regular revenue stream, enabling forward planning for essential maintenance work of the nature reserve. For details of how to become a Fairfield Friend, make a donation, or even leave us some part of your estate visit: <https://fairfieldassociation.org/get-involved/fairfield-friends>

**Already a Fairfield Friend?** Your annual payment may now be due. You can pay by cheque, BACS or you may prefer to set up a standing order.

### For more information

-  [fairfieldassociation.org](https://fairfieldassociation.org)
-  [info@fairfieldassociation.org](mailto:info@fairfieldassociation.org)
-  FairfieldAssociation
-  @FairfieldAssoc

**Please report anti-social behaviour in the Playground or Nature Reserve by phoning the Police on 101**



## Fairfield Association Newsletter

**Spring 2024**

Registered Charity Number 1058030



The Fairfield Association is a Lancaster community-based environmental charity which funds and maintains Fairfield Nature Reserve, Fairfield Millennium Orchard, Fairfield Green Playground and Aldcliffe Road Triangle.

## Fairfield Green Playground Update

Work on replacing the playground began in the autumn, and has taken longer than hoped, but the installation should be complete by the end of March. Lancaster City Council kindly offered to do the work for free (representing a net saving to the FA of c. £30,000) but the engineers doing the work are also required elsewhere in the city when urgent repairs are needed, and recent storm damage has kept them occupied. This, coupled with atrocious weather has meant that we are behind schedule. Nonetheless, many of the units have been constructed indoors and we should start to see them on-site in the next few weeks. We know the delay has been frustrating, but are confident that the new playground will be more than worth the wait!

Building on the success of **Pizza in the Park** last May we will be returning with another outdoor fundraising event on **Saturday 25th May** – expect pizza, music and more! We are especially keen to showcase any young local musical talent: if you know of any bands who'd like to play outdoors in the park please ask them to contact [brennand@gmail.com](mailto:brennand@gmail.com) Look out for more details about the event online and on noticeboards nearer the time.

## Community events

In September we celebrated **Apple Day** in the Orchard with a variety of apples, the usual fun and games, tea and cake. **Carol Singing** followed on

Christmas Eve, with a large group of singers of all ages, led by Duncan Bell on his trumpet. **Wassailing** took place in January, and so much sound was made banging pots and pans and chanting that we can be confident of an excellent harvest in 2024! We were once again joined by Gladly Solemn Sound who brought the event to an end as the short day darkened and the bonfire was lit. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to these events.

Our next event will be the annual **Easter Egg Hunt** which will take place in the Orchard on **Monday 1st April 2024** (Easter Monday). Come along for live music, tea and cakes, children's crafts, our Easter Bonnet competition – and of course Easter Eggs! We are looking for volunteers to help on the day: if you are able to help please contact [fairfieldeasteregghunt@outlook.com](mailto:fairfieldeasteregghunt@outlook.com)

### **Fairfield Website**

The Fairfield Association website <https://fairfielddassociation.org/> has just undergone a major redesign. Along with the new look, we have added new pages, including information about the different fields and meadows that make up the Reserve. We have also incorporated the Aldcliffe Road Triangle website into the Fairfield site. We plan to make further improvements over the coming months: please let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions.

### **Fairfield Calendar**

We sold all our calendars last year - thanks to everyone who contributed, Please continue to send in photos for next year – we need a range to choose from, appropriate to each month. The quality needed is 300 dpi, around 3507 x 2480 pixels. Photos should be sent to Julia McDowell [fairfielddassociation2014@gmail.com](mailto:fairfielddassociation2014@gmail.com)

### **Nature Reserve Review**

Winter work on the reserve is coming to an end. 1,000 saplings have been planted along the western border of West Field, and 40m of hedge laid between Flora Field and Lower Sowerholme. These will form thick hedgerows for birds to nest or shelter in. Hazel has been coppiced to let

light into the woodland and willow and hedges trimmed. Fruit trees have been pruned and checked for canker.

Our project with the Lancaster and District Bird Watching Society continues with daily topping up of the feeding tables in Flora Field, attracting small birds such as reed bunting, brambling and chaffinch. Bird boxes have been checked and repaired or replaced. Each month over-wintering snipe and woodcock (pictured, right) were counted by walking through and flushing them from the rushes where they hide. We also commission a winter bird survey, which supplemented with sightings recorded on the board by the Pony Wood Path or put on the blog, enable us to see which areas of the reserve are most successful for wintering wildlife.

### **Fairfield Association Meetings**

The most recent AGM took place on 17th October 2023. This was well-attended and agreed unanimously the addition to our Object published in the last newsletter. We also appointed a new trustee, Sue Pope, who is now the Secretary of the Fairfield Association. We are very happy to have Sue on board.

Monthly Fairfield Association meetings take place in the Tite and Locke at 7.30 pm on the third Tuesday of every month. These meetings are open to all, and newcomers are always welcome. Details of all our events and meetings can be found on the website: <https://fairfielddassociation.org>



*Illustrations: Woodcock (top), Snipe (bottom), both by Clio Graham*